

# **How to plan Local Elections**

**ONE SHILLING**

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# How to Plan Local Elections

THIS pamphlet deals with the annual elections to Municipal Borough Councils which take place on November 1st, or if that is on a Sunday, on November 2nd. It also deals with U.D.C. and R.D.C. elections which take place annually (but only in some areas—mostly they are triennial) on the first Monday in April, or if that is Easter Monday, the last Monday in March.

It is best in dealing with U.D.C. and R.D.C. elections to check the date of the election with the Town Clerk or the Returning Officer as these dates vary in different areas, some being held after the first Monday in April.

The pamphlet can also be used for the County Council elections which take place every third year, and in the Metropolitan Borough Elections which occur every third year on November 1st.

## I. BEFORE THE ELECTION

In Council elections for County, Municipal and Metropolitan Boroughs, the election campaign proper commences on or about October 8th, that is, only three weeks before Polling Day. Therefore well-planned preparatory work must be attended to beforehand. This means:

- (a) the Party Branch should have selected its prospective Council Candidate, who must conform to the stipulated qualifications (see **Appendix II**).
- (b) the Branch "Election Team" should have been selected and be getting on with its job (see later pages of this pamphlet).

Without waiting for the Election Campaign to start, the Party Branch through its Election Team should issue a leaflet explaining why the Party intends to contest the election and introducing its Prospective Candidate who will have been selected some time back. This leaflet should have the widest possible circulation among the electorate.

### PRELIMINARY CANVASS.

To test the ground, a Preliminary Canvass should be conducted by the Branch in almost the same way as the Election Final Canvass, and should cover the whole of the resident voters in the Ward before October 15th at the latest.

For this purpose the *Draft Electoral Register* (usually published on or about August 15th) should be used. Two copies of this *Draft Register* should be obtainable free by the Branch Secretary from the Electoral Registration Officer at the Town Hall. *They are not usually supplied except to Parties which have assisted in its compilation.*

Copies of the *final* Register can be purchased from the Town Hall when completed.

Note that there are now *three* Registers for each Ward:

G Register of Civilian Voters  
 B " " Business Premises Voters.  
 X " " Forces Voters.

Electors on the X Register will be able to vote at Council Elections only through Proxies properly appointed, or by personal attendance at the Polling Station.

The Registers should be pasted on paste-board, and ruled as follows:—

" A "

POLLING DISTRICT: B C REGISTER  
 SMITH ST.

Reg. No.	Name	Com.	Lab.	T.	Others	Doubtful	Remarks
2345	Jones, Emma	1					
2346	Jones, William	1					
2347	Brown, John	2					
	etc.						

This should be done both with the Draft Registers, for the preliminary canvass, and with the actual Registers which are issued on October 15th. When purchasing Registers try to get one printed only on one side. Remember to paste only one street on each piece of pasteboard. If the street is long, then use other pieces, but do not put two streets on the same board.

On the Preliminary Canvass, voters can be asked if they would support So-and-So as Communist Candidate if adopted to stand. Information recorded on the pasted-up sheets of the Draft Registers must later be transferred to those of the actual Registers for subsequent canvasses. In order not to incur any expense, the Preliminary Canvass could be conducted from the Branch Premises or the room of a member of the Ward or Borough.

## II. THE ELECTION TEAM

In each Branch or Borough the most capable Branch members who, together with the Candidate, will constitute the *Election Committee*, should be selected as soon as possible so that they can prepare the campaign in good time.

This Committee would normally consist of:

The Candidate

The Election Agent, who will lead the work of the Election Committee (Note: There is no statutory office of Election Agent in Local Elections, but it is usual to have someone in charge of the campaign, who has the courtesy title of Agent and is treated as such by the Returning Officer)

The Treasurer  
The Canvassing Organiser  
The Committee Room Manager  
The Meetings and Loud Speaker Van Organiser  
The Publicity Officer

When Branch forces are limited, some of these offices can be combined.

The Branch should use its initiative in determining the size and character of this team.

*On or about October 8th in Municipal Borough Council Elections or March 8th for U.D.C. and R.D.C. elections the Branch should by resolution formally adopt its candidates and approve of the election team.*

#### WARD COMMITTEES.

Where more than one ward is being contested in a Borough or District, there should also be a Ward Agent, Ward Canvassing Officer and Ward Committee Room Manager, constituting a Ward Election Committee for each contested Ward and working in close co-ordination with the Borough or Central Election Committee. Care should be taken to prevent duplication of functions between Ward and Central Election Committees. Where there are a number of Polling Districts in the Ward, the above arrangements for the officials will have to be changed, as it is important to have leading comrades working in the Polling Districts, too.

#### BRANCH COMMITTEES AND ELECTION COMMITTEES.

Closest contact should be maintained between the two Committees, and their division of responsibility clearly defined. The Borough Committee is responsible for allocating helpers to the contested Ward(s). The Branch Committee should continue all the essential work of the Party not directly connected with the election, such as collection of dues, registration of new members, etc.

*It must be clearly understood that these are model committees only. Branches must organise according to their capacity.*

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## THE DUTIES OF THE BOROUGH ELECTION COMMITTEE AND ITS OFFICERS

### I. The Committee

The Election Committee is responsible for the political guidance of all the Party's election work in the Borough.

It will be responsible for:

- (1) Drawing up the local programme upon the basis of which the election will be fought and all election material, including the election address, will be issued;
- (2) Assessing the voting position in the ward and, on a careful analysis

of the voting figures and the prospects of the contesting Candidates, working out the probable percentage of votes that will be cast and the actual target of promises needed to secure victory. Experience shows that for each actual vote two promises have to be won. It is of the utmost importance that a sober estimation be made as an optimistic carelessness can lead to an entirely false picture of the progress of the election campaign;

- (3) Guiding the Candidate on any political problems that emerge in the course of the campaign;
- (4) Approving the election budget; and
- (5) Allocation between areas of the forces available from the Branch.

## II. The Candidate

The Candidate's personality, record and individual work in the campaign will play a decisive part in ensuring success. His time must be used to the best advantage—which is mainly on the doorstep. He must personally canvass in all important streets and blocks in the Ward. He should be seen everywhere—on the doorstep, used with a team of canvassers in each important area in turn. He should personally visit a selected list of people of special interest in the area—working class leaders in the Co-op., T.U. and Labour Movement, housewives who are respected for their work in their own streets, the small shopkeepers, etc. He should be ready and able to take up individual cases.

When not canvassing he should tour the area with the loud speaker van for short 10-minute street meetings.

Do not tie him up with a whole series of static open-air meetings during the vital last three weeks of the campaign.

If you can spare one member to be responsible for the candidate's activities and correspondence, this will help to keep him out of the Committee Room, and among the people. This member would work out the Candidate's daily (or evening, if he is only available in the evening) work in consultation with the Canvassing and Meetings Organisers, and subject to the approval of the Agent.

The Candidate must sign a Consent to Nomination (Appendix 2) within one month before Nomination Day.

He need not personally hand in the Nomination Papers.

He should appoint Polling (Personation) Agents and Counting Agents where necessary.

He should attend the Count. After the Declaration of the Result the successful candidate will move a vote of thanks to the Returning Officer and his staff, and his unsuccessful opponent will second the motion.

Except in the Metropolitan Boroughs, U.D.C. and R.D.C., he must see that all claims are paid within 21 days of the Declaration, and a Return of Expenses lodged with the Returning Officer within 28 days (Appendix 3 and 3A).

He should be shown on the imprint as the publisher of all material issued during the campaign.

### III. The Agent

The Agent must look upon himself as the leader and co-ordinator of all the work of the campaign.

On the basis of the general plan laid down by the Election Committee he will work out with each Officer the plan and details of the latter's work. He should prevent overlapping, be ready to assist where any weakness reveals itself, and ensure that the plans are carried out.

He should be thoroughly familiar with the Ward.

He should introduce himself to the Returning Officer and his Deputy. These officers are invariably most helpful and anxious to secure the complete co-operation of Agents. He should do all things requiring personal visits to the Town Hall in connection with the Election.

He should be familiar with the Election time-table (Appendix 4a) and with the legal technicalities as set out in this pamphlet.

He should know what are corrupt and illegal practices, etc. (see Appendix 5).

He must be responsible for authorising in writing any expenditure of money for election purposes.

He should try to get two free copies of the Draft Register in August from the Town Hall and purchase copies of the new Register immediately it is published on October 15th. If the budget allows, it is usually desirable to buy a third copy of the Register. He should also make arrangements with the Returning Officer to get a list of proxies appointed by Forces Voters.

On the basis of the budget he should see that arrangements are made by the Publicity Officer with a printer (on the Fair List) for all printing anticipated.

He must also:

Get a photo block of the candidate made.

Draft the Poll Cards.

Approve the Election Address, and ensure its production and distribution as soon after October 15th as all the addressing can be completed.

On the official side he must:

- (1) Get the Candidate's Consent to Nomination (Appendix 2).
- (2) See that the Candidate is duly nominated. The Nomination Papers can be obtained from the Returning Officer. Get them filled up two days before Nomination Day. Take them to the Returning Officer, who will usually check them with you in advance, so that there can be no hitch on Nomination Day. There is no deposit payable in Municipal Elections.
- (3) See that Polling (Personation) Agents (if he decides these are neces-



sary) and Counting Agents are appointed in time and Declarations of Secrecy made. The form of Declaration can be obtained from the Returning Officer.

- (4) Get tickets to enable the Candidate and Agent to visit the Polling Stations on Polling Day. The Agent will have to file a Declaration of Secrecy.
- (5) Attend the Count and Declaration.
- (6) See that all claims are paid and Return of Expenses filed.

NOTE.—Always have in mind a deliberate last minute attack on the Party by the opponents and make necessary arrangements for an immediate answer by leaflets and loud-speaker.

## IV. The Treasurer

Is responsible for organising the raising of all funds for the election and for controlling the expenditure. Proper accounts should be kept of all monies received during the campaign, and all sums paid out.

In a County Council, L.C.C. and Municipal Borough Council Election, a full return of all payments made supported by receipted accounts for all sums over £1 must be made by the Candidate to the Returning Officer within 28 days of the Declaration. No return has to be submitted of money received. The Treasurer should prepare the return of expenses in consultation with the Agent. No return is made in other Local Elections (apart from Parliamentary Elections).

It would be a wise precaution for the Treasurer to open a special account, into which all money should be paid, and from which all payments duly authorised by the Agent should be met. No person other than the Treasurer should be allowed to make any payments.

The Treasurer should make sure that no illegal or corrupt expenditure is incurred (Appendix 5).

As there is a very narrow limit to expenses in County and Municipal Boroughs, a careful budget should be prepared and approved by the Election Committee as one of its first tasks. A financial statement should be presented to each meeting of the Election Committee.

The limits of expenditure are as follow:—

- (1) Where there is one candidate, £25 for the first 500 electors in the Ward, and 2d. per elector for each elector after the first 500.
- (2) Where there are two joint candidates the maximum amount of expenses shall for each such joint candidates be reduced by one-fourth, or where there are more than two joint candidates, by one-third.

Example:—Ward of 5,300 electors:

1	Candidate—Maximum	£65	0	0	
2	Candidates	„	£97	0	0
{ or more					
3	„	„	£130	0	0

A suggested budget is set out in Appendix 6.

NOTE.—In Metropolitan Boroughs, U.D.C. and R.D.C. Elections there are no legal limits to expenses, nor do any returns of expenses have



to be made, but there must be no corrupt or illegal expenses incurred (See Appendix 5). It is strongly recommended, however, that a careful budget be prepared and approved by the Borough Election Committee. In no case must any expenses be incurred except with the authority of the Agent and within the limits of the agreed budget.

Remember—every penny must be raised locally. So collecting cards should be prepared early, and be in the hands of all canvassers and friends. The raising of money is an important aspect of Election activity. The Branch can organise functions, etc., long before the election, in order to build up an Election fund.

## **V. The Canvassing Organiser**

Canvassing is the key job of an election campaign. The fight will be won or lost on the doorstep.

The Canvassing Organiser must be thoroughly familiar with the area and its problems.

### **MATERIALS REQUIRED.**

- (1) The complete results of the Canvass made by the Branch on the basis of the Draft Register.
- (2) A copy of the Register as soon as it is published on October 15th (single-sided).
- (3) Boards ready cut to size for pasting up the new Register, with short instructions to canvassers pasted on the back (Appendix 8a, Form 1). Number these cards.
- (4) Canvass cards for writing up promises.
- (5) Small notebooks and pencils for canvassers.
- (6) A list of all streets, giving number of electors, and remarks on any special problems.
- (7) A large scale street map showing Ward boundaries. This can sometimes be obtained by the Agent from the Town Hall, but in any event the Town Hall will always assist to mark up Ward boundaries on a map supplied.
- (8) Summary of Canvass Returns (Appendix 8b, Form 2).
- (9) Report forms for daily report to Agent, showing number of electors seen and results (Appendix 8c, Form 3). Keep a copy of this for information.
- (10) Supply of any local speakers' notes issued, for the use of canvassers.
- (11) Collecting cards for the canvassers to take out.
- (12) Window Bills.

### **THE TARGET.**

The target of promises needed having been fixed by the Election Committee, the Canvassing Organiser should break this down into limited areas, having regard to where the best support for the Party candidate is to be found, according to the results of the preliminary canvass.

As soon as the New Register is received and pasted up, the results of the preliminary canvass should be transferred to these cards in pencil.

It has been found that the preliminary canvass, which is essential,

is not sufficiently accurate as a guide for Polling Day. Until all the candidates are in the field, and the Election warms up, many promises cannot be relied upon as firm promises. Naturally this will depend on our campaign. We must aim at convincing the people of the correctness of the Communist case and get them to support it *irrespective of who is standing for the other Parties*. Only one Party can solve the problems facing the people, and the whole of our campaign must be directed along these lines. We must fight for the voters for the Party policy. Seen in this light the preliminary canvass can do valuable work by introducing our policy to the people. We must fight and cut down to a minimum the uncertain votes which can be swayed by the candidates of other parties. We must fight for firm promises all the time, but in order to ensure the most correct returns and up-to-date knowledge, special care must be taken with the canvassing *after* October 15th, when all the candidates will most probably be in the field.

Every "Communist Promise" recorded on the preliminary canvass should be visited first.

Then go for the "outs" and "doubtfuls" and new names on the Register. Then, time permitting, go again for the "doubtfuls."

Remember—you need two promises for every sure vote.

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## CANVASSING FOR THE ELECTION

### THE FIRST CANVASS.

The first canvass is important, and it is not too difficult.

The main purpose is to record the political views of as many of the electors as possible in the time available and to give our political line. The names of the other candidates will probably not be known before nomination day, and consequently most promises will have to be rechecked when the other candidates become known. As this is done, the Register Board should be marked with a diagonal line (/) in the appropriate column. You should not allow yourself to be diverted from this by arguments with opponents and doubters, or friendly exchanges with supporters.

During the Election campaign proper you ask the direct question, e.g., "Good evening. Are you Mr. Smith? I am representing the Communist candidate, Mr. Jones, and would like to know whether you propose to vote for him."

The political view of each elector must be obtained. Do not judge a household of four or five electors by the response of the particular one who happens to open the door to you. Sometimes, according to your own judgment, it is advisable to accept the information regarding relatives or neighbours. It is, however, best to press to see each individual elector, if this is at all possible.

## ADDITIONAL POINTS TO NOTE.

1. If you receive a favourable answer, urge the elector to vote early on Polling Day; suggest that he uses his influence with his friends and family to vote as he does; offer him a window-card or a collection card. If he refuses a collection card, ask for a contribution to your own collection card. Ask if he is prepared to assist in any form during the Election, either by canvassing, clerical work, taking messages, distributing leaflets, calling out on Polling Day, etc. In certain areas it may be possible to ask if the elector has a motor car which he is prepared to drive on Polling Day. Any such information should be entered in the notebook.
2. If the Elector is unfavourable offer him literature and/or leaflets, and pass on, making an appropriate note on your board.
3. If the elector is doubtful make a note in your notebook as to the character of the doubt, e.g., he may be non-Party and undecided, or he may be Labour in favour of unity, etc.
4. Make a note of the comments you come across, particularly those that help to reveal what our opponents are saying.
5. Record in your notebook information as to (a) Removals, and if possible find out the address to which they have removed; (b) Sick people, who should not be disturbed, and electors who have died, so that your note will ensure that no further canvasser calls on them.
6. Make a note re conveyance arrangements on Polling Day, i.e., for whom and at what time a car should be sent to convey the elector to and from the Polling Station. This should particularly apply to the infirm, blind, aged and those living at a distance from the Polling Station. This is generally done on Polling Day itself or a day or so before.

## MAIN CANVASS.

It is extremely important in this canvass to visit "doubtfuls" and win them over to us.

For this canvass comrades with political experience are required, though if we adhere to the principle of going in pairs, then a more and a less experienced comrade could go together with a less experienced one. In this period careful use should be made of comrades who are specialists, e.g., a leading Trade Union official to call on the secretary of a Trade Union Branch of his own Union; a leading able woman comrade to call on a doubting woman elector. Special efforts should be made to win people of standing who could influence others.

The canvasser should be confident. He should attempt to deal with the doubts and questions. He should try and confine himself to the current questions and not abstract or historical points. He should show the positive side of the Party and of the movement. He should

make use of literature and leaflets to back his arguments. He should, if necessary, refer the person to an appropriate meeting which the candidate is addressing, to whom he may put his questions.

Other methods would include a mass canvass, i.e., a number of comrades going along a street together, thus ensuring the response from the people, and the use of the loud-speaker, particularly for influencing the disinterested type.

When the doubtful person is won, make a mark on the board in the column "For" and put a circle around the original mark in the "Doubtful" column.

This will guide the Polling District Organiser in his Polling Day concentration, so that special attention may be given to the winning of such people for our candidate.

The additional points noted in the first canvass also apply to this one.

#### LAST CHECK-UP.

If this is held, the main purpose is to carry out a last-minute check on supporters and a last-minute effort at convincing the remaining "Doubtfuls." In this canvass arrangements for Polling Day should be finalised with all electors who require any help whatsoever.

#### HELP THE CANVASSER.

##### *Points to Stress.*

Ensure that each canvasser, before he goes out, is "briefed," i.e., told the local facts, given any special tips about the street, asked to note any women who would be willing to have small gatherings of neighbours in their houses to meet the candidates, note any grievance, note any people whom the candidate should visit personally, etc., and especially to note any political problems raised on the doorstep.

It must be emphasised to canvassers that a promise cannot be relied upon unless the canvasser is satisfied that the elector is aware of *all* the candidates who are standing, and is definitely pledging a vote for the Communist candidate. That is why it is so important to have a thorough canvass after all the candidates have been announced.

Wherever possible the same canvassers should be kept to the same streets throughout.

Attention should be paid to specialised canvassing, e.g., the appropriate canvassers should be sent to selected areas with a special social position, or having problems of a specific character—racial, industrial, etc.

Maximum use should be made of well-known local supporters in introducing canvassers to people whom they themselves know.

Short meetings of canvassers on their return, where experiences

can be exchanged and problems raised on the doorstep can be dealt with, have been found to be very useful.

### RECORDING THE CANVASS.

See that the tables in the Committee Room are well spaced and laid out, and properly staffed so that a canvasser does not waste time waiting to be told where to go, or be supplied with necessary materials, or on his return does not know to whom to report and hand in materials and notes.

Keep the canvassing quite apart from addressing, dispatch of election addresses, etc., preferably in a different room.

Accurate recording of canvassing is essential. When a canvasser returns, the card should immediately be handed to one member, who will write up all promises on promise cards, tot up the figures of electors visited, "for," "against," "doubtful," etc., and tick off all these names on the side of the Register, so that these are not counted in again the next time the card goes out.

The canvass cards should be kept in a box in strict numerical order, divided by coloured cards giving the streets.

It is important that the writing up of Promise Cards should be done each evening, so that all is ready on the eve of Polling Day.

The canvasser should mark his card in coloured pencil or ink, to distinguish his results from the results of the preliminary canvass, already entered on the card in pencil.

### POLLING DISTRICTS.

In a large Ward, with more than one Polling District, the Canvassing Organiser will try and organise (in collaboration with the Committee Rooms Organiser) a Committee Room in each Polling District, and (in collaboration with the Agent) will appoint a Polling District Organiser for each one, to whom most of the functions will be delegated.

The Canvassing Organiser will also have the responsibility of planning where and when the candidate should canvass.

### POLLING DAY.

For Polling Day the Canvassing Organiser will prepare in advance large numbered sheets for each Polling District, giving all the numbers in the Register, preferably marked off in streets, and ringing in red all promises, which should check with the written up canvass cards.

The Canvassing Organiser will see that a record is kept of all cars required on Polling Day, as recorded by the canvassers.

The Canvassing Organiser will ensure that all information gathered by the canvassers is passed to the appropriate office, without delay, e.g., names of people willing to have home meetings, to the



Meetings Organiser; personal problems to the candidate; new political problems to the Agent.

*Note.*—Canvass results, etc., are confidential, and should never be published outside the Election Committee.

#### CANVASSERS AND THE ELECTORAL LAWS.

Electoral laws have been passed to prevent undemocratic practices operating during the Election. These include activities such as bribery, undue influence, personation at the Polls, etc.

Such laws are to the interest of working class Parties as far as they go. There are some aspects that may not be known or not considered illegal, that require emphasis.

Canvassers should remember that they are acting on behalf of the Election Agent, and, in this respect, are subject to the same legal restrictions as he is.

Things that you should know are:

1. Canvassers may not be paid for their services.
2. No refreshments may be supplied to canvassers by the Agent or any other officer in the Election campaign.
3. Fares within the constituency, between the rooms and the electors, may be paid by the Polling District Officer.
4. No one may canvass who is known to have been found guilty of corrupt practices.
5. Canvassers may not bribe, treat or threaten electors to influence them (e.g., to withdraw their custom from a shopkeeper).
6. Canvassers may not incur any expenses without the Agent's written authority.
7. No information regarding electors' intentions, that is gathered by the canvasser, may be disclosed to anyone but the Polling Organiser.

### **VI. The Committee Room Organiser**

Is responsible for finding, equipping, staffing and maintaining all Committee Rooms.

Is responsible for organising the addressing and delivering of election addresses; control and distribution of all printed materials.

Is responsible for allocating all helpers so that they can do the best work (a) where it is most needed, and (b) having regard to the helpers' own abilities and inclinations.

#### COMMITTEE ROOMS.

The legal limit on Committee Rooms that may be paid for is one for every 2,000 electors or part of 2,000. No Committee Room may

be on licensed premises, or where refreshments are served. There is no limit to the number of Committee Rooms which may be lent free to a candidate.

Committee Rooms should be reasonably near the Polling Station. Equipment needed is:—

Tables; chairs; typewriter; duplicator; paper; ink; pens; string, etc.  
A copy of the Register (in sheets).

A list of proxies appointed by Service Voters, which can be obtained by the Agent by special arrangement with the R.O.

Envelopes or rolls of gummed address slips for election addresses.

Map of the Ward.

Display for the front of the Committee Rooms.

The main Committee Rooms should, if possible, provide a room for the Agent and officers, a room for envelope addressing, etc., and a room for canvassers.

One room in a member's house should be sufficient for subsidiary Committee Rooms in Polling Districts.

Make sure the Rooms are well lighted, and heated, and lockable.

#### ADDRESSING.

In consultation with the Agent, decide whether envelopes are to be used for the election addresses and/or poll cards, or whether gummed address slips are to be used. The former are more convenient but very much more expensive. If the latter are used be sure they are of the correct size to fit the space that must be left for them on the back of the election address.

It is desirable to start the addressing before the 15th October, using the draft Register, but in that event Register numbers cannot be put on and a most careful check must be made with the new Register immediately on its publication. It is essential that the election address should be distributed immediately after the 15th October, so that canvassing can follow up at once, and the electors can have the Party statement in their hands as soon as possible.

*Note.*—The organisation of the work of addressing and filling must be precise and orderly or the utmost confusion will arise.

If the Poll Card is being delivered separately, these will also have to be addressed and checked before delivery, which should be as near Polling Day as possible, so that it is to hand when voting.

#### HELPERS.

With regard to the use of helpers, arrangements should be made for registration of all helpers, and their allocation to different jobs. Canvassing should have first priority, after the addressing, etc., has been done.



## CARS.

The Committee Room Organiser will also keep a register of all cars available for Polling Day, and arrange for their use.

## POLLING DAY.

For Polling Day the Committee Room Organiser will keep a register of all helpers available, and the time available, so that he can allocate the jobs of:

Polling Station Checkers (two on together at each station, taking hourly turns with two others);

Committee Room Staff (three);

Knockers-up (using the best canvassers as knockers-up in the streets they have canvassed);

Car drivers and guides.

For Polling Day, in addition to the numbered sheets and canvass cards to be supplied by the Canvassing Organiser, the Committee Room Organiser will supply:

Empty boxes for Poll Cards returned from the Polling Station, and canvass cards where the votes have been cast;

Hourly report forms of votes cast for each Polling Station;

Pencils and pads for checkers outside Polling Station;

Rosettes (no money must be spent on these).

*NOTE.—No expenditure must be incurred without the written authority of the Agent. No refreshments should be provided. No payments should be made to helpers for expenses.*

## THE MEETINGS AND LOUD SPEAKER VAN ORGANISER.

This aspect of the work is necessarily limited by finance. In the past undue emphasis has been placed on the organised indoor and outdoor meetings, but experience has shown that the best results are obtained by loud speaker tours with short 5 to 10 minute meetings over the loud speaker.

## LOUD SPEAKER VAN.

Arrange for the borrowing or hire of loud speaker equipment and a spare battery and van for the last three weeks. Then it is recommended that one responsible and technically competent member should take full charge of the loud speaker equipment, and if possible, also drive the van. This is a highly responsible, full spare-time job. The member in charge of the van will have the responsibility:

- (a) of ensuring that the equipment is in full working order each day;
- (b) of having one battery on charge all the time;
- (c) of maintaining the van, garaging, filling with petrol, etc. (petrol for a loud speaker van can be paid for out of election funds), and seeing that the van is appropriately decorated with posters, etc.
- (d) in co-ordination with the Meetings Organiser and Canvassing Organiser, working out the programme for each day's work; concentrating on selected sites for meetings during the first week and then

on tours of the Ward, with short 10 minute speeches, especially linked up each evening with those streets upon which the canvassers are concentrating;

- (e) using the van, when it can be spared, with tours, getting the NAME of the candidate across, together with a few well thought out slogans, and announcing meetings. Always have window bills on the van;
- (f) on polling day, calling people out to vote, using well thought out slogans;
- (g) try and arrange for the van to be well lit. Let the speaker be seen at night.

Make sure there are no by-laws prohibiting use of loud speakers for meetings and/or collections.

### HOUSE MEETINGS.

These will be arranged on the basis of information supplied by the Canvassing Organiser, and subject to the availability of the candidate or his wife.

### INDOOR MEETINGS.

Keep the cost down. A candidate is entitled to use of any Council School in the area (not used for evening classes) free except for heating and cleaning. No meetings must be held on licensed premises. Allow ample time for questions to the Candidate.

### FOR ALL MEETINGS.

Use your local speakers. See that they are really aware of the position in the Ward and the issues in the Election.

Remember—it is the women who have the decisive vote in the election; address the meetings to their problems.

## VII. Publicity Officer

### HAVING REGARD TO THE BUDGET:

Make all necessary arrangements well in advance with the printers so that your material can be put through on time.

Prepare an effective lay-out of the Election Address and see it through the press.

Get any necessary blocks of the candidate in *advance*.

Prepare the Window Bill and get it through the press in time.

In collaboration with the Agent, prepare the Poll Card, and put it through the printers. Have it numbered by the printers (check the numbers by the Registers, and have some spare blanks printed). (See Appendix 7).

Work out, in consultation with the Agent, a last minute leaflet in order to meet an attack on the Party or the candidates by the opponents. It has often been done in the past.

Have one good poster, and make all necessary arrangements with the billposters for a good display all through the last three weeks.

Get in touch with the local press and reporters. See that they are well supplied with news items. Try and get a write-up of the Candidate. Book space in the local press *if funds will permit*, and work out how it can best be used each week.

Get the *name* of the Candidate well displayed in every possible way.

Do not forget that everything published must bear the name and address of both printer and publisher (who is the candidate).

## POLLING DAY

By Polling Day many voters will have been won to support our candidates, through our canvassing, meetings, literature, posters, etc.

*But only a few, the more politically conscious, can be relied upon to go of their own accord to the Polling Station to register their vote. Most electors will have to be reminded to do so.* This job is the main task on Polling Day.

The carrying through of this job of getting our votes recorded is the responsibility of the Polling District Organisers. The central organisation should be checking all day long on the progress in each polling district.

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

- (1) THE CANDIDATE should aim to visit all the Committee Rooms to help to encourage the workers. He should visit each Polling Station and make himself known to the officials. He should be seen around as much as possible that day, encouraging people to vote and inspiring his helpers on the job.
- (2) THE AGENT himself will spend the day in the Central Committee Rooms receiving hourly or half-hourly reports by phone from each Polling District Organiser on the progress of the Poll.

As each report comes through one of his workers will record the information; and based on this the Agent can get special steps taken in any Polling District where additional efforts are required to see that all our "promised" votes are actually cast.

- (3) HELPERS NEEDED ON POLLING DAY.

### CHECKERS.

A rota of helpers should be arranged to stand outside the Polling Station all day (each comrade doing at the most a 2-hour shift). Their job is to ask voters coming out from the Polling Station for their Poll Number. The checker writes these down on a slip of paper, or scribbling pad, and despatches them back to the Polling District Organiser by

## RUNNERS,

Who will pick up the information each half-hour.

*Note.*—The checkers should work in harmony with checkers for the other candidates; and if this is done, they will be able to exchange information about any numbers missed. Checkers must not ask how the elector voted, but only for the Polling Number.

## KNOCKERS-UP.

Information will have been recorded from the canvassing of preceding weeks of the electors who have promised to vote for our candidate.

It is these electors only whom we should arrange to call out to poll. Helpers should be provided with the Canvass Cards of these electors, and should call on them to ensure that they are going to the Polling Station.

They should find out what time the voter proposes to go, so that if by that time the checker has not reported that voter's number as "voted," a further call can be made.

They should find out whether transport is needed—preference should be given to the aged, sick, infirm, blind, and those living at a distance from the Polling Station. This information should be clearly recorded on the Canvass Card by the knocker-up, so that the officers at the Rooms can make arrangements.

They should urge people to vote early in the day in order to lessen the last-minute rush before the Poll closes.

In the last few hours of polling, every possible helper should be on the job of getting out our "promises" and turning them into actual votes.

## CAR DRIVERS AND GUIDES.

Information will have been collected during the canvassing, and very carefully noted by the Polling District Organiser or one of his helpers, of people needing transport and at what times it is needed. The Agent should allocate his cars to various Polling Districts; and the Polling District Organiser should see that a guide who knows the district well is allocated to each driver, in order to save time in finding places. If cars are not being fully utilised in one district, the P.D. Organiser should notify the Agent, who will be able to transfer the car to another Polling District.

## PLEASE NOTE.

*PETROL:* The Agent can supply petrol coupons to drivers for Polling Day work, but the petrol must be paid for by the owner or driver and NOT by the Agent or Candidate.

*INSURANCE:* Cars must be insured by the Agent for third party risk.

## LOUDSPEAKER VANS.

One or more loudspeaker vans should be in use and go along calling on the people to vote for our candidate. Brief speeches of 1 or 2 minutes may be advisable, according to the time to spare.

*NOTE.—The van may not make any announcement within 100 yards of any Polling Station.*

### (4) ORGANISING THE WORK AT THE POLLING DISTRICT COMMITTEE ROOMS.

- (a) The Polling District Organiser is in charge of all arrangements during the day.
- (b) The main jobs are (i) to see that every elector who has promised a vote comes to Poll; (ii) to keep an accurate record at the Rooms regarding the progress of the polling; (iii) reporting at regular intervals to the Agent.
- (c) *Getting every supporter out:* By the time Polling Day comes, it is no use bothering any more with those voters who are doubtful. The P.D. Organiser will now concentrate all his attention on those who have promised to vote for our candidate.

All our "promises" should be recorded on individual Promise Cards. A number of these cards (say about 20) bundled with an elastic band should be given to each knocker-up, whose job then is to call on these voters and by perseverance, charm, energy (and, if necessary, minding the baby for ten minutes) see that they go to poll. Begin knocking-up from about 2 p.m. Towards the last hour or so everyone available must be utilised for this purpose.

The P.D. Organiser must keep a careful note of the number of cards given to each knocker-up; and the knocker-up, in turn, must note on the card whether the people have already voted, or at what time they intend going to vote, or those who need conveyances and at what time. When the knocker-up has done all he can with his first 20 cards, he should return them to the Rooms and get a further batch.

- (d) *Accurate records at the Rooms of the progress:* One comrade at the Rooms (with as many helpers as are necessary) should be in charge of noting down all information brought back by the knockers-up on the Promise Cards, particularly about transport; and when this is done, the cards should be replaced in their box.

Another comrade should be in charge of recording the information brought in every half-hour by the runners from

the checkers at the Polling Station. The best method for this is by using a number chart on the wall. On this should previously have been marked (with a single line through the number) the way the voter is going to vote—e.g., Communist voters in Red, Against in Blue, Doubtful in Yellow; or more elaborately Red for Communist, Blue for Tory, Green for Labour, Yellow for Doubtful.

When the numbers of those who have voted come in from the checker, another line is put through the number on the wall chart, to indicate that this vote has been cast. The P.D. Organiser can then see at a glance how the polling is going, and where there are patches of Communist voters who have not yet polled and who need to be got out. (He can also check how the poll for his opponents is going).

When the numbers have been crossed off on the number chart on the wall, the corresponding Promise Cards for the voters should be taken out of their box and transferred into another one, as they are no longer needed for giving to the knockers-up.

Towards the end of the day, when there is a last-minute rush at the polling stations, and reports are coming in quickly from the checkers, while all other helpers are being sent to get out all un-polled Communist supporters, there will be considerable bustle in the Rooms, and it is therefore essential to see that the comrades in charge of this recording work are people who will not lose their heads and get into a flurry.

- (e) *Reporting to the Agent*: Regular reports must be made to the Agent every half-hour during the day of the polling, stating number of voters who have polled, and how many of these are For, Against and Doubtful (the coloured markings on the number charts are the quickest way of giving the P.D. Organiser this information).

#### (5) AT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ROOMS:

The Agent, as a result of the Canvass Returns, will know how many votes the Communist Candidate has been promised from each Polling District. As the Polling Returns come in from the Polling District Organisers, he can make any necessary transfers of cars and/or helpers from one District to another.

If the canvassing has been accurate and not over optimistic (a penny in the box is a better guarantee of a vote than any promise), at the end of the polling, the Agent should know fairly reliably how many votes his candidate has got, how many the other candidates have got, and whether his man is in.



## MISCELLANEOUS POINTS

### CONSENT TO NOMINATION.

- (1) A candidate who is a member of the forces or seaman and is outside the U.K., or who is engaged on war work abroad, may consent to nomination by telegram.
- (2) The Consent to Nomination (or telegram as the case may be) is handed in with Nomination Papers.

### NOMINATION.

Nomination Papers can be obtained from the R.O. Each candidate must be separately nominated by a proposer and seconder, who must be registered as electors in the Ward. The nomination paper must also be signed by 8 assentors, who must be electors in the Ward (except in Met. Boroughs where no assentors are required).

No elector may sign more nomination papers than there are vacancies to be filled, or sign nomination papers in more than one Ward. A candidate may be nominated for more than one Ward, but can only validly stand for one. He must withdraw from all except the one in which he intends to stand in the usual way.

### HOURS OF POLL.

8 a.m.—8 p.m., but may be extended to 9 p.m. on written application of at least as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled. Such applications must be handed to the R.O. not later than the time fixed for withdrawals (see Appendix 4).

### POLLING (PERSONATION) AGENTS.

One Agent per Polling Station may be appointed to detect personation, but this has largely fallen into disuse in large urban areas, and is not recommended.

### COUNTING AGENTS.

Each candidate is usually entitled to appoint one agent to attend the Count, but the actual number is entirely within discretion of the R.O. If only one is allowed, the Agent should be appointed, unless the R.O. will permit him to attend as well. These counting agents are important, and every attempt should be made to select a reliable Party Member.

### DECLARATIONS OF SECRECY.

Where these are required, the forms can usually be obtained from the R.O.



## PETROL.

Arrangements must be made to enable a candidate to obtain petrol coupons for election use. Apart from petrol used in the loud speaker van, or for the candidate to drive round, no petrol can be paid for out of election funds.

## CAR INSURANCE.

A car duly licensed and insured, and lent for taking people to the Poll, is covered by its existing third party insurance, if driven by the owner or a driver nominated by the owner.

## A NOTE ON TIMING.

The timing of our material and canvassing should be carefully considered, with a view to securing the maximum build-up to Polling Day, not a week before, and ensuring that, if the Communist candidate is first in the field with his Election Address and Poster, he is last with his final message.

# APPENDIX 1

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTION AS COUNCILLOR

- (1) Must be British subject over 21 years of age.
- (2) Must **either** (i) be on Electoral Register as a voter in the area of the local authority;  
or (ii) have resided in the area for at least 12 months immediately before the election;  
or (iii) own freehold or leasehold property in the area.

## DISQUALIFICATIONS

A candidate is disqualified if he:—

- (1) Holds any paid office or place of profit under the Council (which includes a teacher in a maintained school);
- (2) Has been found guilty of any corrupt or illegal practice.
- (3) Is bankrupt.
- (4) Has received poor relief in the past 12 months.
- (5) Is an officer in the Regular Forces.

There are other disqualifications, but if there is any doubt, consult the R.O.

# APPENDIX 2

## CONSENT TO NOMINATION

I, the undersigned.....(FULL NAME) .....  
of .....(FULL ADDRESS).....  
hereby consent to my nomination as a candidate at the election of a Councillor  
for.....Ward of the County/Municipal/Metropolitan Borough of  
.....to be held on the.....day of  
.....19

Signed by the said (Candidate's signature)

in the presence of.....(WITNESS'S NAME).....

Address ..... (WITNESS'S ADDRESS) .....

**NOTE 1.** This consent to Nomination must be signed by candidates for the Borough Council, Urban and Rural District Councils. A Parish Council candidate does **NOT** sign one. This consent is handed in with the nomination papers.

## Nomination:

- (i) Nomination papers can be obtained from the R.O. Each candidate must be separately nominated by a proposer and seconder who must be registered as electors in the Ward, or, in County Council elections, in the electoral division. The nomination paper must also be signed by 8 assentors who must be electors in the Ward or electoral division. In County Council elections no person may sign more than one nomination paper, or sign papers in more than one Ward.
- (ii) **R.D.C. and Parish Councils.**  
Candidates standing for these need only a proposer and seconder. They do **NOT** need any more signatures.

**COUNTY COUNCILS, COUNTY BOROUGHs and MUNICIPAL BOROUGHs**  
**FORM OF RETURN OF EXPENSES**

Recept. No.	Nature of Payment	£	s	d.
1.	John Smith & Co., Ltd., 12 High Street. Printing .....	7	10	0
2.	W. H. Smith & Son, Ltd. Station Approach. Typewriting Paper .....	6	6	
3.	Blanktown Co-op. Soc., Ltd., 1 Market Street. Rent of Committee Rooms at including lighting and heating .....	11	0	0
	etc., etc.			

Neither returns nor Declaration are required. There are no time limits for payment of debts and there is no maximum expenditure. Great care must be taken, however, to see that there are no corrupt or illegal practices or payments (see Appendix 5).

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# APPENDIX 4

## TIME-TABLE

Proceeding	County Borough or Mun. Borough	Metropolitan Borough
Notice of Election.	12th day before election.	20th day before election.
Nomination Day.	By 5 p.m. 8th day.	By 5 p.m. 12th day.
Notice by R.O. of decisions as to validity of nomination and publication of candidates duly nominated.	By 5 p.m. 7th day.	By 5 p.m. 11th day.
Delivery of Notices of withdrawals from Candidatures.	By 2 p.m. 6th day.	By 5 p.m. 9th day.
Application for extension of Polling hours.	By 2 p.m. 6th day.	By 5 p.m. 9th day.
Notice of Poll.	5th day.	5th day.
Notice of Polling, Agents and Declarations of Secrecy to R.O.	Two clear days before the day of election.	
Ditto as to Agents to attend the Count.	Two clear days before the day of election.	
Election Day.	1st November, 19	1st November, 19
Claims for expenses.	14 days after Polling Day.	_____
Claims to be paid.	21 days after Polling Day.	_____
Return of Expenses to be lodged by	28 days after Polling Day.	_____

**NOTE:** Sundays are not counted.

# APPENDIX 4a

## TIME-TABLE

	County Council	U.D.C., R.D.C., P.C.
Proceeding		
Notice of Election	20th day before Election	20th day before Elections
Delivery of Nomination Papers	by 5 p.m. 12th day before Elections	by 5 p.m. 12th day before Elections
Despatch of Notices of decision on nominations and publication of statement of persons nominated	by 5 p.m. 11th day before Election	by 5 p.m. 11th day before Elections
Delivery of notices of withdrawals from candidatures	by 5 p.m. 9th day before Election	by 5 p.m. 9th day before Elections
Notice of Poll	5th day before Elections	5th day before Elections
Election Day	March 8th, 1946	
Claims for Expenses.	14 days after Polling Day	
Claims to be paid	21 days after Polling Day	
Return of Expenses and Declaration to be lodged by	28 days after Polling Day	

**NOTE:** In reckoning time **before** the election, Sundays are not counted.

# APPENDIX 5

## CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES

### CORRUPTION:

- (i) Bribery.
- (ii) Treating.
- (iii) Undue influence.
- (iv) Personation.
- (v) False declaration of Election Expenses.

### ILLEGAL PRACTICES INCLUDE:—

- (i) Exceeding maximum permitted expenses.
- (ii) Paying for Committee Rooms in excess of legal number.
- (iii) Paying for conveyances to take people to the Poll.  
(This includes payment for petrol).
- (iv) Paying for exhibition of bills, by an elector (other than a contractor).
- (v) Paying for bands, banners, cockades, ribbons, etc.
- (vi) Exceeding permitted number of paid agents or clerks.  
(Two for first 2,000 electors and 1 more for each additional 2,000).
- (vii) Publishing any material without imprint.

## APPENDIX 6

### BUDGET FOR COUNTY BOROUGH AND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH WITH LARGE BRANCHES

Est. on electorate of 5,300—1 Candidate permitted expenditure: £65 0 0			£	s.	d.
5,500	Election Address 4 pp. ....	15	0	0	
1,000	Window Bills .....	8	0	0	
500	Do. Cr. Posters .....	5	0	0	
5,500	Poll Cards (numbered) .....	8	0	0	
5,500	Final Leaflet .....	6	0	0	
	Spare copies of the Register .....	1	0	0	
	Committee Rooms (3 weeks rent), heating, lighting, etc. ....	6	0	0	
5,500	Gummed Slips .....	1	10	0	
	(Envelopes would cost approx. £7 10 0)				
	Strawboards, string, pencils, pads, stationery, duplicating ink, paper, etc .....	5	0	0	
250	Collecting Cards .....	1	0	0	
3,000	Canvass Cards .....	1	10	0	
	Loud Speaker maintenance (3 weeks) .....	4	10	0	
	Incidental Meetings Expenses .....	2	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£64</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>

## APPENDIX 6a

### (For Small Branches or Groups)

#### BUDGET

(COUNTY COUNCIL—estimate on electorate of 2,000—1 candidate)

		£	s.	d.
2,000	combined Election Address and Leaflet (4 pp) .....	6	0	0
2,000	Poll Cards (numbered) .....	2	10	0
	Spare copies of the Register .....	1	0	0
2,000	Gummed Slips .....	10	0	
	(Envelopes would cost approx. £7 10 0)			
	Strawboards, string, pencils, pads, stationery, duplicating ink, paper, etc. ....	4	0	0
50	Collecting Cards .....	5	0	
2,000	Canvass Cards .....	1	0	0
	Loud Speaker maintenance (1 week) .....	1	10	0
	Incidental meetings expenses .....	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

**NOTE:** We give this purely as an example. It is obvious that a Branch in a village or small town could not possibly need so much nor run such a campaign as budgeted for above. In a larger area the budget can be increased in proportion.

Even if no returns are necessary in the U.D.C., R.D.C. or P.C., a budget is essential.

## APPENDIX 7

SPECIMEN POLL CARD for a voter on the C (Civilian) Register.  
This is optional, but will prove extremely useful on Election Day.

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XMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTION

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### ST. JOHN'S WARD

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Polling Day:

**THURSDAY, 1st NOVEMBER, 19**

or

**THURSDAY, 15th APRIL, 19**

8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Your Polling District is ..... B

Your No. is ..... C. 2345

You Vote at:

**COUNCIL SCHOOL, MAIN STREET**

Please Vote for the Communist Candidate (or Candidates)  
by voting thus:

---

**SMITH**

**X**

---

Please hand this card to our representative as you leave.

It will save your being troubled later.

---

Imprint.

---



## APPENDIX 8a

## FORM 1

Duplicate this on a suitable size of paper to be pasted on the back of the cardboard sheets on which the Electoral Register is already pasted. Put on the list important local facts the canvassers should know, as well as essential addresses and phone numbers.

VOTERS ON THIS CARD WILL VOTE AT .....

**NOTES FOR CANVASSERS:**

- (1) Before leaving the Committee Room be sure you have:—
    - (i) A coloured pencil.
    - (ii) A notebook.
    - (iii) Spare copies of the Election Address.
    - (iv) A collecting card.
    - (v) Window cards.
  - (2) Mark this card with the coloured pencil with a cross in the proper column, i.e. Com., Tory, Lab., Ind., or doubtful. Take no notice of any other marks on this card.
  - (3) Note in your notebook:—
    - (i) Any death.
    - (ii) Any removals—if possible give new address.
    - (iii) The name of any woman willing to have a small meeting in her home, to be addressed by the candidate or his wife, or any other speaker. Do not fix a definite time.
    - (iv) Who takes a window card.
    - (v) Any questions or arguments used by voters.
    - (vi) Any voter needing a car on Polling Day.
  - (4) Don't be held up too long by arguments either with opponents or doubters. We will try and visit the doubters again.
  - (5) Make a note in your book of any person whom you meet who is not on the Register. Find out their address on 30th June.
  - (6) When you return to the Committee Room, hand in all materials and donations, and **make sure all your notes are understood by the Canvassing Organiser before you leave.**
- Many thanks—come again!

## APPENDIX 8b

## FORM 2

**SMOOTH COUNCIL ELECTIONS  
ST. JOHN'S WARD**

**SUMMARY OF CANVASS RETURNS FOR ..... 19**

(To be compiled by Committee Room Clerk as canvassers return, after their own returns have been checked, and then added up by Polling District and transferred to Report Sheet each evening.)

Canvass Card No.	Poll Dist.	No. can- vassed	Comm	Tory	Lab.	No. of Doubtful re- canvassed included in the figs.

To be entered on Daily Report to Agent.

# APPENDIX 8c

FORM 3

XMOUTH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

ST. JOHN'S WARD

DAILY REPORT TO AGENT

Date

Polling District	Total Canvassed	C.P.	Tory	Labour	Doubtful
A.					
B1.					
B2.					
etc.					
etc.					
Totals					

## CUMULATIVE TOTALS

(the above added each day to previous totals.)

A.					
B1.					
B2.					
etc.					
etc.					
Totals					

## APPENDIX 9

FOR USE OF AGENT

DATE:

NO.

### ANALYSIS OF DAILY REPORT FROM POLLING DISTRICTS

WARD	Polling Dist.	No of Electors	Houses Canvassed	Electors Resident	Electors seen	Com.	Lab.	Lib.	Doubtful
	A.1								
	B.2								
	C.3								

## APPENDIX 10

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Report No.....

FOR USE BY AGENT

### WARD DAILY CANVASS AND WORK RETURN

Date for which return is made.....19

	Com.	Lab.	Tory	Other	Doubtful
PREVIOUS DAY'S TOTALS					
TODAY'S RETURNS					
TOTALS TO DATE					

No. of workers: **CANVASSERS**.....**OTHERS**.....

#### MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:

Quantity	Description